

FREE SPEECH

The First Amendment to the Constitution

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.



KENNESAW STATE
UNIVERSITY

Freedom of Speech, Expression and Assembly on Campus

As a public college in the State of Georgia, KSU is required to uphold the First Amendment rights of those in its campus community, including freedom of speech, freedom of expression, and the right to assemble peacefully. **KSU is committed to safeguarding these essential rights.** Some individuals and groups may choose to exercise their First Amendment rights by expressing opinions you find offensive or hurtful, sometimes deeply so. KSU must allow the expression of such views, even though they may contradict KSU's mission or values. As a KSU campus community member, you **cannot** prevent someone else from engaging in expressive activity. For example, you cannot block groups of protestors from view, shout down speakers, or try to force the cancellation of an event because you disagree with the opinions expressed. You can, however, exercise your First Amendment rights by expressing your own views. Discriminatory harassment is not protected under the First Amendment, and is subject to KSU's Non Discrimination Policy.

Suggestions for Responding to Objectionable Speech

1. **Keep walking:** While speakers have the right to speak, you do not have to listen. You can change your route and choose to deny the speaker an audience for speech you find objectionable.
2. **Hands off:** Whatever you do, make sure not to physically engage with speakers in any way. Some speakers may try to provoke a response from you. Touching, pushing, or striking speakers can lead to criminal charges as well as charges under the Student Code of Conduct. Do not let speech that offends you turn into an arrest or charges against you.
3. **Engagement:** If you choose to engage, do so in a respectful manner. Arguing and shouting is unlikely to change the opinions of speakers whose beliefs you do not share. Student Activities staff and the Dean of Students office can help with information about coordinating opportunities for counter speech.
4. **Connect with others:** If you are concerned or upset by the views expressed by speakers on campus, get involved with student organizations and university departments that share your values and interests.

REPORT A CONCERN

kennesaw.edu/concern

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

For information about Kennesaw State's Freedom of Expression Policy visit: publicforum.kennesaw.edu

Dean of Students Office

Carmichael Student Center
Room 274
470-578-6367 (KSU-ODOS)
deanofstudents@kennesaw.edu

Division of Student Affairs

Marietta Campus
Wilson Student Center. Room
230
470-578-7556
wilsonstudentcenter@kennesaw.edu

First Amendment Facts/FAQs:
[legal.kennesaw.edu/resources/
first_amendment.php](https://legal.kennesaw.edu/resources/first_amendment.php)



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